

Parody on Texas.

[A correspondent of the St. Joseph, (Mo.) Herald, who has been to Texas, describes our State in the following parody. Of course there is some exaggeration embodied in his verse, but we are constrained to admit that there is a wonderful sight of facts sprinkled in.—Denton News.]

Beautiful Texas! What do you think?
Plenty of grapes, and no wine to drink;
Plenty of creeks, and no water at hand,
No oats for your horses, but plenty of land.
Plenty of horses, but none fit to ride;
Plenty of poverty, and some little pride;
Plenty of hides, and no leather that's tanned;
Though scabby mosquito encumbers the land.
Plenty of cattle, no butter or milk;
No dress for the dairy, but plenty of silk;
Plenty of rain, when it comes down at all,
Enough and to spare would it come at your call;
Plenty of wind, no drawback on that,
And when talking of stock, there is plenty of chat.
Plenty of rock, the cisterns to wall,
But we cannot find time to do it at all.
Plenty of bois d'arc, but hardly a hedge;
Plenty of hogs as thin as a wedge,
Plenty of bacon year before last,
Plenty again when there comes a good mast.
Plenty of chairs, but all so low
That to eat, you must hang on your own elbow.
Plenty of grub, such as poor beef and bacon,
Which reminds you of the home you have sadly for-
saken.

Of land of great promise, not yet fulfilled,
What a country you might be if people so willed!
All teeming with beauty, plenty and wealth,
Every requisite here for comfort and health,
But with corn bread and bacon, men have enough;
And women get happy over a bottle of snuff.

[Injustice, it should be added, that the era in Texas so graphically described above, is steadily passing away since the advent of the railroad dis-
semination.—Ed. Free Press.]

A GRAPHIC PICTURE OF THE SAN MARCOS SPRINGS.

THE GLORIES OF THEIR SUB-AQUEOUS DEPTHS.

Bishop Doggett, of the Methodist Church South, visited San Marcos in the fall of 1877, and wrote a letter to the Richmond Va. Christian Advocate descriptive of a boat trip he made to the head of the river, from which we make the following extracts:

"I witnessed at the ford where we crossed, a curious scene, reminding me of the habits of the hippopotamus. A number of cattle were feeding in the stream above, wading nearly to their backs, plunging their heads entirely under the water, and gathering the grass which grows at the bottom. I was not aware that horned animals ever indulged in this species of grazing.

After angling with moderate luck in one of the bays, in which, on account of the singular transparency, the fish and the fishermen were perfectly visible to each other, we ascended the river in a skiff, to its fountain-head. It has no preliminary or tributary streams. It bursts immediately from the limestone ledge at the bottom of the ridge, and bubbles up with immense volume, like a vast cauldron underneath the surface, with a violence which agitates the mass of water, for a considerable distance, and which threw the boat from the ascending column. Its average depth, for the distance specified is fifteen or twenty feet, and its width about fifty yards. Above the point of emergence, is neither chasm or depression. The earth is level and cultivated up to the mountain out of which it bursts, laterally and perpendicularly. Its temperature is uniform, winter and summer, at about 69° Fahrenheit. The water has a slightly alkaline taste. It is as transparent as the atmosphere, and one could apparently read an ordinary newspaper at the bottom. Every object is perfectly distinct, as in an aquarium.

The marvel of this wonderful river, however, is not its abrupt origin or its crystal clearness, but the wealth of sub-aquatic vegetation. Its margin is not only lined with overhanging shrubs and clustering heaps of wild cresses; and its surface in many places, floating with wavy tresses of long and silken grass, springing from its depths and floating in the current off for twenty or thirty feet, but its entire bottom is covered with an almost unbroken tissue of delicately tinted and beautifully variegated vegetation blooming beneath the surface, under whose picturesque foliage the lithe and agile fishes perform their graceful motions; and whose crystal waves the imaginative Greek would have peopled with laughing water-nymphs. I doubt if any water-scene of the same extent, abounds with more transcendent beauty. It is a genuine, original green-house. It is nature's own conservatory where her rarest productions are preserved in amaranthine freshness, encased in a framework of rustic grandeur, and seen through surfaces of perpetual purity. Could the San Marcos natural museum be reproduced in the Eastern States and in a higher latitude, it would attract the attention of the fashionable world and arouse the enthusiasm of rival artists. One must be incurably obtuse to look into this mirror of nature, and not be transported with its exquisite imagery.

More of Our River.

A correspondent of a Northern newspaper wrote from San Marcos in 1873 as follows:

"The San Marcos River is a great natural wonder, well worth going a long distance to see. About a half mile above the town it surges up from the rocky base of the mountains, a full-born river, as Minerva sprang armed cap-a-pie from the head of Jupiter, in classic fable. Fifty yards above you have no trace of its exist-

ence—the dusty valley is as silent as was the Highland pass ere the whistle of Roderick Dhu filled it with the serried ranks and waving pennons of his clansmen. Descending, after passing several minor springs, you all at once behold the river boiling up from the bowels of the earth, filling a large basin in the hills and woods, and then rolling grandly oceanward. But the half has not been told; the water is the purest spring water, clear as the very air, revealing every fish and pebble for many feet below. Its depth is seldom found less than mid-sides to a horse, while it is often twenty feet or more. It abounds in fine black bass (here improperly styled trout) and other fish. It affords ample power for all sorts of machinery. It could be used in irrigating the valley below, and could readily be conveyed to supply the town with water. During the driest season it is not often known to fail an iota; on the contrary, it is said to run stronger in summer than in winter. This, it is conjectured, is owing to the melting of the ice and snow at its far subterranean source, but where that is, is yet but conjecture. Be that as it may, it is certainly an inestimable blessing to a thirsty land like Texas."

During the coldest days of winter, steam as from a boiling cauldron rises from the surface of the water, as in smaller springs.

The finest view of the river is to be had by going on a boat on its upper waters. The many-colored flowers, plants and stones on the bottom give out from its crystal depths all the varying hues of the kaleidoscope, forming a fairy world of wonders of incomparable beauty.

The San Marcos is indeed a joy, glory and blessing forevermore, to all the lovely region round about.

HAYS COUNTY SCENERY.

TRIP TO THE PERDIALES—DEAD MAN'S HOLE—JACOB'S WELL, ETC.

Hays county can boast of some of the grandest and most romantic natural scenery to be found in Texas. We copy the following interesting passages from a well written account of an excursion, which appeared in the Lockhart Echo of July 21, 1874.—Ed. Free Press.

"Ho! for the mountains," was the gathering cry of a merry party of excursionists that left our town on the 9th of July for the hill country of the Perdiales. Forty in all, their bugles, hacks and baggage wagons, loaded with eatables and wearables, made a display, and their merry calls and shouts a gay confusion that brought the country people to their doors en masse as they passed. Dinner was spread at Pecan Springs, ten miles on the way, and in the afternoon we passed on through Mountain City, enjoying for miles the beautiful panorama of luxuriant fields, cozy homes, verdant prairies and shady groves that stretch in graceful undulations far away to the east and south, while, through the timber frequent glimpses of mountain tops kept our imaginations fixed on the point of destination.

Towards noon next day we came out on the terraced hills and ridges that form such a remarkable feature of the landscape in that section. Not having a geological turn of mind, I will not attempt to account for this peculiar formation, but to unaccustomed eyes it forms a picturesque scene. It offers long level stretches of the smoothest road that was ever seen in a mountainous country. Occasionally we would leave a steep rocky ascent or descent from one terrace to another, and then the hard, smooth, white road would follow the same level for a long distance. At the Cold Springs on Jackson's Creek we found a most agreeable situation, there being an arbor, a barbecue pit and other conveniences that had been used for the accommodation of a camp meeting, which closed only a few days before we arrived. Words would fail to express our enjoyment of the water, which was clear, sweet and pure, and only a few degrees above the freezing point. Game seemed abundant, and we contentedly settled ourselves to remain over Sunday.

In the afternoon most of the party walked half a mile to a picturesque gorge in the hills festooned with ferns, shaded by overhanging trees and watered by a tiny, trickling spring. Monday morning we were early on the way, aiming to reach the Perdiales river by noon, and visit a pool called the "Dead Man's Hole" en route. Few of the party had ever visited this spot, and there was nothing in the approaches to excite unusual interest. Our surprise and delight were therefore all the greater when it burst upon the view. Situated in the rocky channel of Falls Creek, a stream not much larger than our Lockhart spring branch, it is a deep, blue, dangerous looking pool of water. It is circular in form, about seventy-five yards in diameter, and is said to be bottomless; with overhanging cliffs of rock sixty or seventy feet high, and at the spot the horse shoe curve the cliffs make the stream leap over the rocks, making a beautiful fall eight or ten feet in width. All around the edges of the

cliffs the water trickles out, watering a luxuriant growth of ferns, that form a beautiful and graceful contrast to the gray of the limestone, and falling on the surface of the pool like a continuous shower of rain. The surface under the cliffs is crusted with stalactites in great variety, and of all sizes, shapes and colors, some a pure white crystallized formation, others gray, some tipped with moss over which the carbonate of lime is incrusting, and others of the most delicate filagree work. On the north-eastern side a large portion of the cliff has at some time given way and fallen into the water, the upper surface of which is several feet above the water, and affords an opportunity for examining the face of the cliff. Going several hundred yards behind the pool the party found a point at which they could descend into the gorge, and by clambering over immense cypress logs and roots and crossing the little stream several times, we made our way to the lower edge of the pool and climbed upon the rocks. The view from this point surpassed that from the top of the cliffs, and the overhanging rocks cast a shadow far out into the water. From the level of the pool the channel runs on down between the high cliffs, and the water winds its way among the rocks, with a merry ripple, as if it felt happy in running from a pool with such a ghastly title. One of our party ventured into the water on a dilapidated raft, and being very warm from exercise took the cramp in his arms and had considerable difficulty in getting out. He succeeded in getting near enough to the bank to reach a pole, and was drawn out. There being no shade for a camp, we reluctantly left this beautiful place and went on to the river, the ultimate aim of our excursion. During the night the fishermen were quite successful, obtaining about one hundred pounds, and for a while we feasted on fish. Tuesday morning one of the hunters came in with a fine turkey and another reported that he had wounded a Mexican lion. Deer were very scarce, however, and the hunters were anxious to get back to the deer region, and as none of us were very much in love with the place, there were few regrets when we turned our faces homeward. Still I would say to every one who admires bold, wild scenery and is fond of fish, to go by way of Dead Man's Hole to the Perdiales.

We visited the Hole again on our return, all supplying themselves with specimens of the stalactites as mementoes of the place. Tuesday afternoon we visited Dripping Springs, and came on and camped at a spring near the foot of Wallace mountain. Wednesday we remained at the same point, and the party made excursions to the top of Wallace Mountain, where is one of those piles of rocks which are occasionally found on the tops of these peaks, and are said to have been used as landmarks by the Indians. Thursday morning found us en route for Jacob's Well. The country being similar to that already passed over, occupied but little of our attention, it being absorbed by the prior duty of keeping dry during a heavy shower, as Mother Nature seemed intent upon giving us a taste of all sorts of weather. But before we reached the Well the clouds blew away and the sun came out as we reached the ridge overlooking the beautiful, magnificent valley of the Blanco, which stretches away between double and triple lines of terraced peaks and hills until it is lost in the distance. The Well was soon reached, and called forth expressions of wonder and admiration from the party, some of whom admired it more than the Hole, but I think it falls far short of it in grandeur and beauty. Situated in a rocky channel that is dry above it except in times of freshets, is the circular depression in the rock, about twelve feet in diameter and about forty or fifty feet in depth, out of which comes rushing a bold stream of clear, cold water. The current is so strong that a rock thrown in sinks to the bottom much as a feather sinks through the air, and so clear that when the sun is shining into the well a pin dropped into the water can be distinctly seen until it reaches the bottom. The sides of the well are irregular in form, and beautifully ornamented with mosses and pebbles. On one side rocks overhang the well, but on the other the margin slopes away smoothly, and the water goes singing and rippling away, a stream more than half as large as the San Marcos river at the town. In the afternoon most of the excursionists made the ascent of one of the Twin Sisters. These sharp, conical peaks rise abruptly out of the Blanco valley and form a conspicuous object in the landscape from any of the ridges overlooking the valley. Terraced in formation like the ridges, the terraces are high and narrow and run entirely round the hills that are completely round, and the only way to make the ascent is to climb straight up from one terrace to another until you reach the top. The ascent is very fatiguing, but the view from the top is ample recompense. You seem to be in the center of an amphitheater. Hills blending together in one magnificent wall, enclosing a varied scene of wood, plain and river, and farms interspersed throughout.

The Right Time to go North and to Come South. The San Antonio Express joins the New Orleans Picayune in contending that there is no advantage in going north during summer to escape hot weather. And the age concurs with the Express and Picayune. From the middle of June to the middle of August, the period usually chosen for going north, the

mercury ranges higher in New York City, Boston or St. Paul than in Houston, Galveston or San Antonio.—[Houston Age.]

After considerable thought and observation on the subject, we have come to the conclusion that they who go north at all to escape the hot weather had better wait till the latter part of summer. The long continuance of the summer heats in Texas, rather than their excess, is the thing hardest to bear. The hot weather here holds, almost without abatement, throughout August and September, while at the North, about the middle of August the nights at least become cool, frost often prevailing. By leaving here about that time, therefore, (and there can be nothing gained by leaving sooner, for it is hotter there than here,) you escape some two months of hot weather, and return from the bracing air of a northern autumn to a winter here no more severe. In other words you shorten the Texas summer two months or more—a great relief.

On the same principle, the best time to come South is, say in November. The weather is not often severely cold at the North before that time, and by coming then you escape its more severe stages and some two months of the latter end of winter entirely. It is true you can come to this part of Texas in midsummer with impunity on the score of health, as we know, but it is an injudicious and unnatural time to select to come; while to come at the beginning of winter, gives a most delightful change, and you become accustomed to the climate by natural and pleasant gradations.

Why Go To Texas?

The superior advantages which Texas offers to grain farming are no less important than in stock raising. Fertility of soil being equal, the essential elements of successful farming are economy of time and labor. Every day spent in plowing, sowing and harvesting is a source of profit, while every day spent in meeting the demands of winter is a consuming tax. About one-half of the time of northern farmers may be devoted to productive labor, and the other half to waste or in consuming the products of summer. How different in this climate, where the farmer may drive his plow, his seeder or his reaper twelve months in each year! While ice bound in the North, here we may plow or sow almost without interruption. Quernan, at less expense for machinery, can here perform annually the productive labor that will require two or three to perform in winter-bound regions. Considering this most important element of profit in farming, why choose a new home where even two or three months each year must be worse than wasted?

Not only in the absence of winter, but in diversified products, does the farmer find profitable employ of time. Soil and climate suited to the raising of but one or two kinds of crops must limit the farmer to a very short planting season. In proportion as a man sows shall he be benefitted to reap. Many sections of Kansas, Nebraska, Iowa and Illinois are only adapted to corn raising, and the planting season is limited to about two weeks. The same holds true in many sections of the North, where wheat is the only reliable crop. How restricted the productive labor season where such is the fact. Where even a greater number of crops can be raised, there is little advantage gained if the planting of the same must be done at about the same time. A man cannot plant only in proportion as he has had time to plow, so that where the plow is ice bound until in April or the first of May, spring ploughing and planting comes on at the same time.

How different again in Texas, where the farmer is given two months in the fall for wheat sowing, one month in the winter for sowing wheat, oats and barley, two months in the spring for planting, leaving still ample time for ploughing and harvesting. To the above crops may be added all the other crops grown on this continent, and scarcely any two need come in conflict for reasonable planting or harvesting, properly diversified.

Another great advantage offered in Texas to the man who has not the means to buy a large farm, is the adaptation of soil and climate to double cropping each year. Cotton, corn or millet may be planted on a stubble in the spring, from which has just been taken a very heavy crop of wheat, oats or barley, as the above grains may be harvested by the first of May. Then in the fall or winter of the same year, wheat, oats or barley may be resown on the same land, with a repetition of crops the following spring. It will thus be seen that one acre of rich Texas land will yield twice the products annually and give a net profit four-fold greater. These superior money making advantages to be secured in Texas from any given cash capital, great or small, are incontrovertible. The inconveniences, sacrifices, and privations are certainly no greater in this than in any other state. Whether a person chooses a frontier home, or a home within the limits of well settled districts, railroad advantages, schools and churches, he can secure any fixed grade of land in Texas at less price than the same is offered in any other state. Within two

to ten miles of thriving railroad towns, in the midst of improved farms, choice lands, beautiful and healthy, can be bought at from \$3 to \$10 per acre, the prices varying as well from circumstances of the owners as from difference in quantity. Space forbids our mentioning many points in this argument, but in our candid judgment, the intelligent farmer and citizen will find good and sufficient reasons why he should invest and locate in Texas, rather than in any other state.—Texas Products and Progress.

The Kind of People Who Are Wanted In Texas.

In the first place, we have more doctors than are needed and more than can make a legitimate support. Ours is a healthy country, and a very few doctors will answer the purpose. It one half that are here would drop medicine and take up the plow, they would be more sure of a living, and the country would be vastly benefitted. We have mind times too many lawyers. The State could well afford to make a "big swap," and trade off seven eighths of her lawyers for Northern farmers, at the rate of forty lawyers for one farmer, and make "big money" by the exchange. If we had a few more good preachers, and a great many less poor ones, we think the churches in Texas would be more prosperous, and religion rate considerably higher.

We have all the clerks, counter hoppers, book-keepers, lawyers, doctors and deadheads the country can well support, and we cannot advise any more to come. But we do want and must have farmers. We have plenty of room, and will gladly welcome within our borders five million good farmers. Any man who is determined to make his living by tilling the soil, will be received with outstretched arms. We want many stock-raisers as can come. We have as fine a stock country as can be found anywhere in the world, and we want more stock men. We want farm laborers, we want dairymen, cheese, and butter makers; we want fruit growers, gardeners, wool growers, and manufacturers. But we want most of all, farmers—40 acre farmers, 80 acre farmers, and 160 acre farmers. We want farmers who plow deep and put in their seed in good season. We want subsoil men. We don't want that class of men who break prairie with a shovel plow and one mule, and who depend too much on Providence for a crop without labor. We want early rising, hard-working, sober, industrious, good managing men, and with such, our prosperity as a State and county is certain.—Waco Examiner.

A Ten Year Old Boy's View of the Situation.

[The following was found among his papers after his decease.—Ed.]

SAN MARCOS.

San Marcos is a very pretty place to look at, but not very nice to live in. In the summer sometimes the weather is so bad that the farmers can't plant early enough to get their crops in before the frost. In the winter sometimes it rains so much that it is too muddy to plant, and then when it does get dry enough the frost comes and kills a good many vegetables, and then they have to plant over again, sometimes four or five times. When the frost has gone then the dry spell comes on, and in the middle of the summer the wells begin to go dry, and most all the little creeks, too, and the grass dries, and cattle; sometimes the people have to drive their cattle for five or ten miles to water them. The San Marcos River has never gone dry. The people have to haul water for five or six miles, and sometimes more. The mud here is as sticky as glue, pretty near; if you get it on your feet, you can hardly get it off in bad weather with a knife to clean your shoe or boot. The best thing they have here to wear in muddy weather is a pair of big rough boots with high tops. There are a good many negroes here, and Mexicans; and in 1874 there was not very much business and not very good crops, but in 1875 it was a rainy and muddy winter, and in the summer all the wells went dry, most, and there was hardly any crops made and hardly any business at all, and you could hardly find any butter or eggs or milk, and there was hardly anything at the stores, and what you did get was mighty high, the beef was high, and everything.

In the mountains the trees look pretty and green. There are a great many prickly pears in the mountains, and some caves and big cliffs. There are big live oaks in the woods. They grow in large bunches and are crooked; they start up sort o' bending over, and then twist about each other and bend over in seven or eight feet from the ground. They are always green; when it is coming spring all the leaves drop off on the ground and leave young buds on. The elm tree is not green in the winter, its leaves drop off, and leave it bare, the leaves cover the ground all over, and they keep dropping all the year. The cedar is a nice tree; it makes the woods smell with its odor; and the aguarita is a little bush which bears a little berry, its leaf has three little thorns on it. When the aguaritas are ripe, they make a nice pie; it tastes a little like currant pies.

The San Marcos River is a clear stream, it rises in the mountains at the bottom of a large hill; it has flowers and grass growing in the bottom. It is nice to go in a boat on it to the head. You can see the bottom of it in the deepest places. The water-bonnets in some places are stretched across, pretty near, and look like land with weeds growing on it. CHAS. E. J. J. JULIAN.

SAN MARCOS, TEX., Feb. 22, 1876.

Our thanks are due to Mr. Fortson, our County Assessor, as well as to Judge Kone, for valuable aid rendered us in this publication.

Last year the best lands in Hays county produced from two to two and a half bales of cotton to the acre. But this was quite exceptional.